CLAIMS

1. A method of selecting categorised content items for download to a mobile device, the method involving the steps of:

(a) - monitoring, at the device, use of content items downloaded to the device by detecting both positive usage events indicative of a user's preference for a particular content item and negative usage events indicative of a user's dislike of a particular content item,

(b) - deriving a category-based user-preference profile on the basis of the detected usage events and category indicator information associated with each item, the detected positive and negative usage events being respectively used to increase and decrease preferences indicated by the profile, for the content item categories associated with the content items to which the events relate; and

(c) - controlling the download of content items to the device from a content source on the basis of the preference profile and the categorisation of the content items available from the content source.

2. A method according to claim 1, wherein the positive usage events include at least one of:

- the use to the end of a particular content item
- the selection for use of a particular content item
- the selection for re-use of a particular content item.

3. A method according to claim 1, wherein the positive usage events include the active indication by the user of a liking for a particular content item by activation of a preference indicator input.

4. A method according to claim 1, wherein the negative usage events include at least one of:

- the interruption of use of content item;
- the skipping of a content item.

5. A method according to claim 1, wherein the downloading of content items in step (c) is effected over a main download channel at a download station with the content items being stored in a store of the device for later use, the method also involving the downloading of content items over a radio-based channel whilst the device is away from the download station, steps (a) and (b) taking into account content downloaded via both channels.

6. A method according to claim 5, wherein the radio-based channel is a broadcast radio channel.

7. A method according to claim 5, wherein the radio-based channel is a data-capable bearer channel of a Public Land Mobile Network.

8. A method according to claim 1, wherein the mix of categories across the items downloaded in step (c) reflecting the relative preferences of the user for the various categories as indicated by the preference profile.

9. A method according to claim 1, wherein the mix of categories across items downloaded in step(c) is controlled such that, taken over several downloads, the mix of downloaded items reflects the relative preferences of the user for the various categories as indicated by the preference profile.

10. A method according to claim 1, wherein in step (c) the downloaded content items are stored in a store of the device for later use, this store already containing categorized items and the mix of categories across the items downloaded in step (c) being controlled such that the total holding of items in the store reflects the relative preferences of the user for the various categories as indicated by the preference profile.

11. A method according to claim 1, wherein the device includes a speech input interface through which a user can select a particular category of content item for use, the interface including a speech recognizer and the method including the further steps of:

- providing to the speech recognizer, information on which categories are preferred by

the user as identified by the user- preference profile whereby to facilitate recognition of the preferred categories;

- receiving a spoken request via the speech recognizer for a particular category of item and selecting for use an item of the selected category.

12. A method according to claim 1, wherein step (b) is effected at the device and step (c) involves downloading the profile to said source for item selection to be effected at the source.

13. A method according to claim 1, wherein step (b) is effected at said source following the transfer of data about the detected usage events from the mobile device to the source, step (c) also being effected at the source.

14. A method according to claim 1, wherein step (b) is effected off the device following the transfer of data about the detected usage events from the device, the preferences profile when generated being loaded back to the device and step (c) being effected at the device.

15. A mobile device comprising:

- a communications interface for downloading categorised content items;
- a content handling subsystem for storing and playing downloaded content items to a user; and
- a usage monitor for deriving usage data concerning use of the downloaded content items, the monitor comprising a first arrangement for detecting positive usage events indicative of a user's preference for a particular content item, and a second arrangement for detecting negative usage events indicative of a user's dislike of a particular content item.

16. A device according to claim 15, wherein the first arrangement comprises means for detecting the use to the end of a particular content item.

17. A device according to claim 15, wherein the first arrangement comprises means for detecting the selection for use of a particular content item.

18. A device according to claim 15, wherein the first arrangement comprises means for detecting the selection for re-use of a particular content item.

19. A device according to claim 15, wherein the first arrangement comprises means for detecting an active indication by the user of a liking for a particular content item by activation of a preference indicator input.

20. A device according to claim 15, wherein the second arrangement comprises means for detecting the interruption of use of content item.

21. A device according to claim 15, wherein the second arrangement comprises means for detecting the skipping of a content item.

22. A device according to claim 15, wherein the communications interface is arranged to upload the usage data from the usage monitor whereby to enable a remote apparatus to derive a user-preferences profile for use in selecting item for download to the device.

23. A device according to claim 15, wherein the communications interface is arranged to upload usage data from the usage monitor whereby to enable a remote apparatus to derive a user-preferences profile, the communications interface being further arranged to receive back the derived profile and use it to select items form download.

24. A method of selecting categorised content items for download to a mobile device, the method involving the steps of:

(a) - monitoring, at the device, use of content items downloaded to the device whereby to derive usage data providing an indication of use of the content items by content-item category as indicated by category indicator information associated with each item;

(b) - deriving a category-based user-preference profile on the basis of the usage data; and

(c) - controlling the download of content items to the device from a content source on the basis of the preference profile and the categorisation of the content items available from the content source;

at least one of steps (b) and (c) being effected off the device.

25. A method according to claim 24, wherein step (b) is effected at the device and step (c) involves downloading the profile to said source for item selection to be effected at the source.

26. A method according to claim 24, wherein step (b) is effected at said source following the transfer of said usage data to the source, step (c) also being effected at the source.

27. A method according to claim 24, wherein step (b) is effected off the device following the transfer of said usage data from the device, the preferences profile when generated being loaded back to the device and step (c) being effected at the device.

28. A method according to claim 24, wherein the downloading of content items in step (c) is effected over a main download channel at a download station with the content items being stored in a store of the device for later use, the method also involving the downloading of content items over a radio-based channel whilst the device is away from the download station, steps (a) and (b) taking into account content downloaded via both channels.

29. A method according to claim 24, wherein in step (c) the downloaded content items are stored in a store of the device for later use, this store already containing categorized items and the mix of categories across the items downloaded in step (c) being controlled such that the total holding of items in the store reflects the relative preferences of the user for the various categories as indicated by the preference profile.